

### REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 2, 10-13, 15-26, 28-39 and 50-58 are presented for consideration. Claims 1, 16, 22, 28 and 30 are independent. Claims 40, 41 and 43-49 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter has been added.

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 1, 2, 10-13, 15-26, 28-39 and 50-58 have been allowed over the art of record.

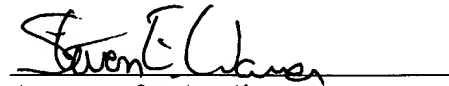
Applicants request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claims 40, 41 and 43-49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by European patent document number 1 069 448 to Suenaga et al. Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach or suggest many features of the present invention, as previously recited in claims 40, 41 and 43-49. Therefore, this rejection is respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, in order to expedite allowance of the subject application, Applicants have canceled claims 40, 41 and 43-49 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to file a continuing application directed to the subject matter of these claims. Claims 40, 41 and 43-49 having been canceled, this rejection has become moot and should be withdrawn.

All pending claims, namely, claims 1, 2, 10-13, 15-25, 28-39 and 50-58 have been allowed over the art of record. Applicants submit, therefore, that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Steven E. Warner", is written over a horizontal line.

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